

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /092 W
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R 151505Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 994
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 11796

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, UR, SO, ET, OAU
SUBJECT: TASS STATEMENT ON OGADEN CONFLICT

REF: MOSCOW 11426

SUMMARY: TASS STATEMENT ON HORN OF AFRICA HOSTILITIES IN
AUG 14 CENTRAL PRESS REPRESENTS ESCALATION OF PUBLIC SOVIET
CONCERN VOER CONTINUED FIGHTING IN OGADEN. STATEMENT
ATTEMPTS TO CONTINUE SOVIET BALANCING ACT EXEMPLIFIED
BY AUG 7 SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE STATEMENT (REFTEL), BUT
IMPLICITLY FAVORS ETHIOPIAN SIDE OF DISPUTE. STATEMENT
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CALLS FOR CEASE FIRE AND NEGOTIATIONS, BUT PROVIDES NO HINT
OF FUTURE SOVIET POLICY MOVES SHOULD SITUATION CONTINUE
TO WORSEN. END SUMMARY.

1. BY ITS NATURE, A TAS STATEMENT IS OF COURSE MUCH MORE
AUTHORITATIVE THAN A STATEMENT BY SOVIET SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
(REFTEL). IN ADDITION, AUG 14 TASS STATEMENT MAKES MORE DEFINITE

COMMENT THAN HAD SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE'S AUG. 7 STATEMENT ON HOSTILITIES IN OGADEN BETWEEN REGULAR UNITS OF ETHIOPIAN AND SOMALI TROOPS AND PARTICIPATION OF PLANES, TANKS AND ARTILLERY.

2. MEW ELEMENT IN AUG 14 TASS STATEMENT IS CHARGE THAT REACTIONARY FORCES ARE MAKING ATTACKS ON SOVIET UNION AND ITS POLICY IN EFFORT TO TEAR ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA AWAY FROM "NATURAL ALLIES AND FRIENDS."

3. STATEMENT APPROVES ETHIOPIAN CALL FOR EMERGENCY SESSION OF OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND SAYS THAT "PEACEFUL POLITICAL SOLUTION AT NEGOTIATING TABLE" IS "ONLY" CORRECT AND REASONABLE APPROACH. AFTER OFFICIAL EXPRESSION OF "SERIOUS CONCERN" ON PART SOVIET LEADING CIRCLES, AND FLAT STATEMENT THAT INVASION OF TERRITORY WILL DAMAGE CAUSE OF PEACE AND SECURITY, TASS STATEMENT EXPRESSES HOPE THAT SOMALI AND ETHIOPIAN LEADERS WILL SHOW "STATE WISDOM AND SELF-RESTRAINT," WILL IMMEDIATELY STOP ARMED CONFLICT, SIT AT NEGOTIATING TABLE, AND BEGIN CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE.

4. COMMENT: MOSCOW CONTINUES TO BALANCE BETWEEN TWO BELLIGERENT ALLIES, BUT AUGUST 14 STATEMENT CLEARLY ESCALATES LEVEL OF SOVIET CONCERN OVER CONTINUING HOSTILITIES. WHILE EXACT SOVIET POLICY MOVES IN EVENT OF WORSENING SITUATION ARE NOT SPELLED OUT, TILT TOWARD ETHIOPIANS HAS BECOME MORE PRONOUNCED AND MORE OBVIOUS.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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